



PRESS RELEASE
*Office of the United States Attorney
Middle District of Florida*

PAUL I. PEREZ
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

400 North Tampa Street
Suite 3200
Tampa, Florida 33602
813/274-6000
813/274-6300 (Fax)

300 North Hogan Street
Suite 700
Jacksonville, Florida 32201
904/301-6300
904/301-6310 (Fax)

80 North Hughey Avenue,
Room 201
Orlando, Florida 32801
407/648-7500
407/648-7643 (Fax)

2110 First Street,
Suite 3-137
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
239/461-2200
239/461-2219 (fax)

Contact: Steve Cole ♦ Public Affairs Specialist ♦ 813/274-6352

For Immediate Release

October 29, 2003

**SECOND MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ROBBERY
OF DELTONA BRANCH OF BANCO POPULAR**

Orlando, Florida - United States Attorney Paul I. Perez announced that **STEVE ABSALON**, a 28 year old resident of Orlando, pleaded guilty on Tuesday to a two-count indictment charging him with armed bank robbery (Count One) and carrying a firearm during a crime of violence (Count Two). As to Count One, the maximum penalty Absalon faces is 25 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, 5 years of supervised release and a special assessment of \$100. With regard to Count Two, Absalon faces a *consecutive* mandatory minimum term of 7 years' imprisonment up to life imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, 5 years of supervised release and a special assessment of \$100. His co-defendant, Nick Anzoil Baussan, previously entered guilty pleas to both charges on October 21, 2003.

According to the plea agreement, Absalon and Baussan entered a Volusia County branch of Banco Popular on the morning of May 28, 2003. The men wore nylon masks in an effort to disguise their appearance and carried a .25 caliber semi-automatic pistol. Once inside the bank, Baussan and Absalon held employees and customers at gunpoint,

vaulted the teller counter and obtained \$4,446 in cash. As they fled the bank, however, the men dropped a plastic bag of currency and a backpack containing Baussan's mail and assorted personal items. Fingerprints found on the plastic bag matched Absalon.

This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative. United States Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials and calling our effort "Project Safe Neighborhoods - Operation HALT the Violence!" The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

The case was investigated by the Daytona Beach Resident Agency of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Volusia County Sheriff's Office. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert E. Bodnar, Jr. Sentencing will be set before the Honorable Patricia C. Fawsett, Chief United States District Judge.